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KENYAN ADDS STRENGTH
TO MONTANA JUMPERS

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MISSOULA---

Information Services • University of Montana • Missoula, Montana 59801 • (406) 243-2522
by Don Brunell
UM Sports Information Director

One of the bright spots on the University of Montana track team this spring is the triple jump event, coach Harley Lewis said.

"We have two excellent freshmen competing in the event," the Grizzly coach said. Glen Chaffey, a former Missoula Hellgate long and triple jumper, was recruited by Lewis last spring and last week at the Montana Invitational in Missoula recorded the best triple jump mark in the Big Sky Conference this year. He jumped 45-5 3/4 for a new meet record.

Chaffey's teammate is from Kenya and last year as a prep athlete, Monassetts Kigame leaped 46-4. Kigame's is equivalent to the University of Montana record set by Bill Rice, Chadron, Neb., in 1964.

Kigame is from Maragoli, Kenya, and is a wildlife biology major at the Missoula university. He is attending the University on a four-year scholarship from the Institute of International Education, an American organization.

The Montana freshman lives in the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity house in the Garden City. He said he got interested in trying out for the UM track team after talking to some of his roommates. "I told them what I had jumped in high school and they urged me to tryout," Kigame said. He has seen only limited action this spring due to a pulled muscle but Lewis hopes to have him ready for the Big Sky finals in Missoula, May 14-15.

Kigame began his track career last year in his high school's intramural program. "Soccer, field hockey, rugby and basketball are our major sports and our high school's have a games master in charge of all athletic activity," he said. "I competed for our boarding house which is similar to dormitories on U.S. college campuses."

MORE

Kigame said Kenyan high schools have a six year curriculum and students must pass stringent entrance examinations and comprehensive tests to enter the fifth and sixth years. The examinations cover everything the students were exposed to and are similar to the C.P.A. (Certified Public Accountant) exams in the U.S. where everything a college business student has learned is tested. Kigame said of the 50 in his grade school only ten passed tests to enter high school.

Kigame said most of Kenya's top athletes are in the army or on the police force. and the top caliber athletic competition is between different army or police units. "Of course our army is different from yours (U.S.)," he said, "we have no draft and actual combat is limited to border disputes."

He said Kenya's Rift Valley provides most of the nation's top athletes. The Rift Valley is located in central Kenya and is between the Mau Hills to the west and the Abadares Mountains on the east. "In the Rift Valley two tribes provide most of the top athletes," Kigame said.

The Montana freshman said the Nandi and Kisii tribes inhabit the Rift Valley and are a tall and slender people. Kipchoge Keino, Amos Biwott and Naftali Temu are natives of the two tribes and were Olympic gold medalists at Mexico City in 1968. Keino won the 1,500-meters; Biwott won the 3,000-meter steeplechase and Temu won the 10,000-meters in the 1968 Olympics.

Kigame said the Kenyans are not known for their triple jumping ability but said the caliber of track competition is steadily improving in Kenya.

Kigame plans to complete his studies at the University of Montana and return to Kenya as a wildlife biologist.